



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 8**

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MAR 04 2014

Ref: EPR-N

Todd W. Brindal, Superintendant
National Park Service
Glen Canyon National Recreation Area
Rainbow Bridge National Monument
ORV Plan/DEIS, PO Box 1507
Page, AZ 86040-1507

Re: Glen Canyon National Recreation Area Off-
road Vehicle Management Plan and Draft
Environmental Impact Statement
CEQ # 20130382

Dear Superintendant Brindal:

In accordance with our responsibilities under Section 102(2) (C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 8 (EPA) has reviewed the Glen Canyon National Recreation Area (NRA) Off-road Vehicle (ORV) and Street Legal All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) Management Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Draft EIS) prepared by the National Park Service (NPS). It is the EPA's responsibility to provide an independent review and evaluation of the potential environmental impacts of this project, which includes a rating of the environmental impacts of the proposed action and the adequacy of the Draft EIS.

Project Description

The Draft EIS evaluates off-road use by conventional and non-conventional motor vehicles and on-road use by non-conventional motor vehicles to develop management actions that preserve the Glen Canyon NRA's scientific, scenic, and historic features; provide for the recreational use and enjoyment of the area; and promote the resources and values for which the area was established as a unit of the national park system. The alternative selected for implementation by the NPS will become the ORV and ATV Management Plan and form the basis for a special regulation to manage any approved off-road use and guide management of off-road use for the next 10 to 15 years. The Preferred Alternative (Alternative E: Mixed Use) designates a mixture of opportunities for motorized recreation on park roads and designated ORV routes and at remote shoreline areas while prohibiting such uses in areas where resources and values may be at risk. It includes provisions to improve signs and road/route markings; develop a communication strategy

to better educate visitors on regulations and resource concerns; partner with user groups and other stakeholders; monitor use and mitigate any adverse effects to resources; and close and restore routes and areas not designated for off-road use. A permit system would be established for ORV routes and areas to provide for education on applicable regulations, provide for visitor safety, prevent resource damage and recover costs for monitoring, mitigation, education and administration of the permit system.

The EPA's Comments

The Preferred Alternative is designed to protect resources and enhance the visitor experience by identifying and designating specific areas capable of supporting off-road use while prohibiting such uses in areas where resources and values may be at risk. This represents a reasonable mixed use approach while protecting rare and valuable ecosystem resources at the Glen Canyon NRA. The EPA appreciates the detail included in the Draft EIS to prevent (by reducing ORV use in some areas), identify, minimize and repair impacts from unmanaged motorized recreation under all five alternatives considered. We also appreciate efforts to address our scoping comments related to identifying and describing prevention or mitigation of adverse impacts from ORVs to soils, watersheds, vegetation, wildlife habitat, water quality, cultural resources and other resources of the Glen Canyon NRA.

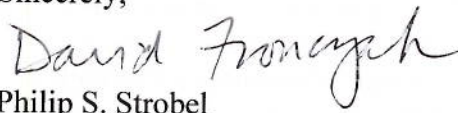
The EPA also appreciates the comprehensive and efficiently organized level of detail that the Draft EIS provides. This helps clarify the current condition of land and water resources where ORVs have historically had unrestricted access to determine whether any unreasonable damage has occurred, and assist in analyzing prevention or mitigation necessary to minimize environmental degradation.

The EPA's Rating

Based on our review, the EPA is rating the Preferred Alternative as "Lack of Objections" (LO). The EPA's review has not identified any potential environmental impacts requiring substantive changes to the Preferred Alternative. A full description of the EPA's rating system can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/compliance/nepa/comments/ratings.html>.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of the EPA's scoping comments and the opportunity to provide comments on the Draft EIS. If you have any questions or would like to discuss our comments or rating, please contact me at 303-312-6704, or the Lead Reviewer for this project, Nat Miullo at 303-312-6233.

Sincerely,

for 

Philip S. Strobel
Acting Director, NEPA Compliance and Review Program
Office of Ecosystem Protection and Remediation